

FRENCH AND AMERICAN CROSS-CULTURAL MILITARY
EDUCATION AND RELATIONS: ONE NAVAL OFFICER'S
PERSPECTIVE

A Research Paper

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Preface

Defining the term ‘cross-cultural education’ proved challenging as I conducted research and collected resource material for this paper. As I discovered, this term had a highly subjective meaning to whomever I consulted. Quite an interesting aspect of this research involved explaining to various American points of contact exactly what was meant by ‘cross-cultural education’. Even more interesting was my attempt to gather information from French points of contact. I experienced cultural differences and misunderstanding first-hand!

The more involved I became in my research the more convinced I became of the benefits of a cross-cultural education for military officers. I garnered that same reaction from every person I consulted or interviewed. I received nothing but enthusiastic cooperation from everyone I contacted in regards to my research. Specifically, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance I received from Colonel Gratien Maire, French Air Force, a student of the United States Air War College; Lieutenant Commander Matthew Beaver, United States Navy, a student at the French Joint Defense College; and Major F. D. Jacques, Attache to the French Embassy, Washington, DC. Most of the information concerning the French Joint Defense College found in this paper was provided by those eager sources. I also wish to give special thanks to my research advisor, Dr. Abigail Gray. Her encouragement boosted my confidence through a

sometimes frustrating process. She provided positive guidance and she never lost faith in me.

Abstract

The global community moves cautiously into an unpredictable 21st century. Concepts of peace, conflict and war blur in the absence of recognized two-party enemies. Humanitarian assistance, terrorists actions, insurgencies and insurrections will now occupy the concerns of leading nations of the world. More certain is the fact that joint, combined, and multinational forces will be involved when the military becomes the chosen instrument of power and method for reaction. With that comes the need not only to understand the enemy—if he can be identified—but also the need to truly understand the ally. Understanding comes from recognition and acknowledgment of cultural traditions, differences, and ways of thought. Recognition and acknowledgment comes from education.

This paper explores the question: Should formal cross-cultural education be a part of professional military education programs? In search of an answer this paper examines and compares two war colleges from separate nations, specifically, the French Joint Defense College and the United States Naval War College.

First, a historical synopsis of the military relationship between France and the US is provided to set the cross-cultural framework. Secondly, a description of the professional military education programs of both nations and a summary of the evolution of the two war colleges establishes the foundation for comparison. Third, the current curricula of the

French Joint Defense College and the United States Naval War College are outlined for comparison.

Finally, the paper concludes with two points in regards to the cross-cultural education question. First, the author suggests that both war colleges examined in this paper are progressive enough to incorporate cross-cultural education formally into their respective curricula. Secondly, and especially for US war colleges, the issue of cross-cultural education should consider not only the study of nations but also of the study of sister services of their own military. The author also makes recommendations for further research.

Chapter 1

Introduction

There is a good probability that any military operation undertaken by the United States of America will have multinational aspects, so extensive is the network of alliances, friendships, and mutual interests established by our nation around the world.

—Joint Pub 1

The reality of contemporary times includes more and more military members working with military personnel from other nations in alliance or coalition efforts to resolve conflicts or provide humanitarian assistance as needed. It is imperative that members of these combined forces have a positive understanding and regard for cultural differences and idiosyncrasies, not only of the peoples of the foreign nations they will be working in, but of other members with whom they will be working as peers, superiors or subordinates. Such functions as leadership, decision-making, disciplinary actions and management of stress, so embedded in the daily routine of any military member, may have contrary approaches based on cultural differences and beliefs. How well do military members from any nation comprehend these differences? Success or failure of alliance or coalition efforts may rest upon this basic premise.

In this paper, the author examines the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College to determine to what extent, if any, either nation incorporates a cross-cultural emphasis into professional military education programs. The

author explores the military relationship between France and the United States, describes the parallel evolution of their War Colleges, and proposes that cross-cultural studies would enhance professional military education programs.

France was chosen as the nation to compare with the United States because of the historically unique relationship between the two countries. Although the United States is a much younger country than France, both were born as democratic states just a few years apart and nurtured on fundamentally similar ideologies. Nations with such like beginnings would assume to be the strongest of allies. Yet, although democratic brethren, through two centuries they have grown up and often clashed, as rival siblings are known to do, in an effort to seek and secure the power and attention of the world. The two cultures are not stridently divergent as with the US and Russia, Japan, Libya or Peru. But neither is there the commonality of a language or of close ties as with the US and Canada, Great Britain or Australia.

This paper begins with a brief historical analysis of the military relations of France and the United States. This provides a necessary foundation for debating the benefit of a cross-cultural framework for professional military education programs. This paper cannot and does not attempt to determine whether cross-cultural education would have changed the outcome of history. However, a historical perspective may alert the reader to a comprehension of how current and future military relationships may improve when officers are educated on cultural differences and influences.

Secondly, this paper describes the evolution of the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College. This scope concentrates on the Joint Professional Military Education of mid-career officers of both nations. Third, this paper compares the

programs and curricula of these two specified military service colleges. Lastly, the author concludes with points of consideration for both war colleges and suggests recommendations for further research.

For purposes of this paper, cross-cultural education is defined as the instruction of cultural differences. Those differences may be obvious or subtle and vary widely linguistically, socially, professionally, politically, religiously, and even militarily. Cross-cultural education will also be referred to as the preparation of individuals or groups for successful work and interaction with individuals who possess different cultural traditions, thoughts and ideals.

Chapter 2

French and American Military Relations: The Historical Perspective

Romantic recall of the American Revolution portrays France as a savior nation who heroically comes to the aid of a fledgling country attempting to free itself from the tyranny of an unjust monarchy. Most Americans would agree that without the help of France during the years of the revolution, the United States would not have gained independence from Great Britain. Until that rebellion, however, the nation that was arguably the greatest threat to the American colonies, particularly along the New York and New England borders, was France.¹

The alliance that developed between the United States and France during the American Revolution was neither “sentimental nor altruistic.”² At that time, France was in a direct power struggle with Great Britain. The defiant colonies desperately needed the sponsorship of a powerful nation. Therefore, the cooperation between the two was logical, and perhaps calculated:

American colonies and France, being vastly different in religion, political views and institutions, cultures, and social structure, understood very little about each other. They were, however, drawn together by a common interest which allowed a viable alliance. That mutual interest was to diminish Great Britain’s power.³

France was the first world power to recognize the United States as an independent nation and signed an official alliance with the new government in February 1778.⁴ French assistance during the war took the form of “naval forces, land forces, logistical support, and loans.”⁵ The impact of the French Navy and the Marine infantry proved pivotal in many defining military victories for the United States over Great Britain. French naval influence and thought on the “embryonic US Navy” went well beyond the boundaries of the revolutionary war years. The new country’s fledgling sea service “borrowed” tactical manuals from France and “the original signals system of the US Navy was based upon an excellent French model.”⁶ Textbooks written by French Navy officers were incorporated into the curriculum taught at the later established United States Naval Academy.⁷

Historians define this period of American and French relations as “the honeymoon period”⁸ and as “the high point of military cooperation.”⁹ Heroic contributions of French notable figures as LaFayette notwithstanding, leading Americans such as George Washington and John Adams still distrusted French intentions and were suspicious of French designs on Canada. For its part, France expended much in the way of financial and military resources on the American cause. In return, France gained very little from her alliance with the Americans except, perhaps, momentary revenge on the British.¹⁰ She went into dangerously deeper national debt, which eventually contributed to the collapse of her monarch government and to the birth of her democracy. The Americans provided no direct military assistance to the cause of the French Revolution. The American contribution was simply one of ideological influence.¹¹

The Americans and the French did not bask in a brotherly bond of camaraderie through the century that followed their respective Revolutions. Such conflicts as the

Napoleonic Wars and the war with Prussia dominated the history of the 19th century in France as did the Civil War and western expansion in the United States. During this time, the world recognized France as one of the great powers and it actively pursued global expansion through colonialism. The United States struggled for identity and concentrated on economic and continental growth. Sea power and trade provided both nations the avenue for such national objectives. Piracy, especially in the early 1800's, was a widespread occurrence. American sea captains frequently pointed angry fingers, legitimately, toward French vessels and accused the owners of high sea robberies. Shots were often fired as an attempt at deterrence or in desperate self-preservation.

Redefining the Relationship: The Tumultuous Twentieth Century

The commencement of World War I in Europe brought that continent to its knees and changed the image of war and the conduct of warfare forever. A young, isolated America saw no need nor motivation for involvement in that skirmish “over there.” Immigrant America and economy-minded Americans recognized no immediate enemy with any of the European combatants. However, the United States contributed large amounts of supplies, primarily medical, to France from the start of the war. American aviators also dashed off to battle with an anxious need for involvement with the tentative beginnings of aerial warfare.¹²

When American troops finally landed on French soil in 1917, one soldier—some historians note that it was General John J. “Blackjack” Pershing himself—announced “Lafayette, we are here!”¹³ Grateful that they were that the Americans had at last arrived to provide the fresh burst of strength to bring the stalemated war to an end, the French

had already lost a generation of young men. It was too late. What impact would the Americans have had on the outcome of the war had they been firmly committed to the Allied side from the onset?

Positive at the start of World War I, American and French relations remained mutually cooperative throughout the duration to victory. However, at the termination of the war, the bond disintegrated. Why? Historians claim it was the battle over peace.¹⁴

Disillusionment quickly replaced the high expectations that accompanied victory. Trust eroded between France and the United States as they negotiated bitterly over post-war German territory, French national security, and President Wilson's grand vision for an "international forum to prevent future wars."¹⁵ At the end of World War I the French looked upon Americans as "meddlers with little understanding of European realities" and the Americans glared at the French and questioned "what they had gained in exchange for the number of American lives lost."¹⁶ The United States drew further into isolationism after World War I.

Charles de Gaulle, an imposing figure who would loom large during World War II and beyond concerning French and American relations, suggested that the United States' lack of involvement in the war until the end, her refusal to forge a strong partnership with France to ensure that nation's security, and her post-war assistance to rebuild Germany contributed to Hitler's rise to power and to the domination of the Nazi regime.¹⁷ Although no military conflicts have actually occurred between the two nations, there has been "a series of nagging difficulties, much mutual distrust, and...a steady drifting apart" of the governments of the United States and France since 1919.¹⁸

Although the rhythm of relations played nearly the same for the Americans and the French in World War II as in World War I, the political infighting between the two nations was much more severe and intense during the Second World War. The swift and complete fall of France in 1940 at the onset of the war not only shocked the United States, but was the moment in history when, in the eyes of the American people, France had ceased to be a leading world power.¹⁹ The ease with which the Germans rumbled through the French countryside to lay claim to French soil created the American perception of total French military unpreparedness and ineptitude. The celerity in which France formed an armistice with Germany and founded the Vichy state fueled American distrust. “France was out of the war for the duration” and had to wait for “liberation by a foreign power in the distant future.”²⁰

Charles de Gaulle emerged as the leader of the Free French, loudly declaring “I am France.”²¹ His bold personality clashed violently with that of President Franklin Roosevelt. Although very wary of the French Vichy government, the United States government did not recognize nor work with the Free French until 1944. De Gaulle took this as a blatant and personal rebuff and never forgot nor forgave the United States throughout his French national leadership and his lifetime. Failure of American policy makers to recognize, admit and act on the emergence of de Gaulle as leader of the Free French is one of the deepest roots of the present difficulties with France.²²

Several political and military incidents occurred which furthered the chaotic wartime and future relationship between the Americans and the French. France still possessed two small islands off the Newfoundland coast. Although the United States and Great Britain both feared that the Vichy government would allow Germany to establish radio stations on

these islands, the United States was outraged when de Gaulle, through French Admiral Muselier, occupied the islands in the name of the Free French. Vessels of the French Navy, the only military service to remain intact after German occupation, skirmished with both British and American ships in the Mediterranean Sea and along the coast of North Africa until the British ordered the French fleet sunk (for fear it would fall into the hands of the Germans).

Winston Churchill, Great Britain's Prime Minister, was able to overlook the pomposity of de Gaulle's character and to recognize in the French leader the strength that motivated the French Resistance and the will that kept hope alive to the average Frenchmen during wartime occupation. President Roosevelt, however, continued to flame the sensitivities of de Gaulle and the French people. He blocked de Gaulle's attendance at both the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. Each were critical meetings which concerned the destiny of Europe..including France. When de Gaulle installed himself in Algiers as the head of the Free French government, Roosevelt and the United States military "grudgingly and distrustfully" began to work with him.²³

The Free French government was "entirely excluded" from the military and political "planning and execution of Operation Overlord, the Normandy landings of June 1944."²⁴ General Eisenhower informed de Gaulle the day before 6 June 1944. French military participation in one of the most important battles of the war and the one to ensure the liberation of France was almost non-existent.²⁵ Initially, Roosevelt envisioned that United States military planners would "occupy" the liberated France until the French were able to restore its own democratic government. Roosevelt feared that should de Gaulle immediately take over as the leader, France would fall into disorder, not be able to supply

allied troops, start a civil war, or perhaps become a communist state.²⁶ Fortunately for the United States, this did not occur.

However, General Eisenhower, against the advice of most of his military and civilian aides, decided to allow the French Second Armored Division to have the honor of liberating Paris.²⁷ This American military officer recognized that “liberation was good for the French collective self-esteem.”²⁸ Eisenhower also influenced the Allied decision to move ahead with Operation Anvil which was the landing of military troops along the Mediterranean coast of France. Unlike Operation Overlord, this military operation was one which included important French participation.²⁹

Throughout the war there were many examples of cooperative American and French military operations in which land, sea, and air units fought together valiantly in the war effort. But, animosity held firm and grew even stronger at the end of the war. “This gap had and still has the consequences that ignorance and misunderstanding are bound to have in such societies.”³⁰

The French and the Americans endured the Cold War together in icy and devious confrontations that negatively impacted political and military relations. Charles de Gaulle remained in power after World War II and focused passionately on the restoration of France to legitimate world power status. However noble his cause, his desire to establish France as a dominant force without the aid of other superpowers, and specifically the United States, was truly unrealistic for a devastated and war-torn nation.³¹ France desperately needed American aid for military protection and for economic and physical restoration. Unable to accept this truth, de Gaulle bitterly resigned his presidency in 1946.

The Fourth Republic of France established a working relationship with the Western Powers. During this period of time the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed. This French government held to the philosophy of de Gaulle and succeeded in developing France into a strong and viable economic power. Yet, the impatience of the French people for recognition as a legitimate global force, coupled with their disillusionment over a protracted war with Algeria, created the climate for Charles de Gaulle to return to power.³² He did so in 1958 and reigned as a world influence throughout the 1960's.

Did de Gaulle's ardent anti-American sentiment effect French foreign policy? Undoubtedly that will be a question and a point of view that will continue to be debated by historians. However, there is no doubt that de Gaulle was a staunch nationalist totally dedicated to the resurrection of France as a "first rate" power³³ and he would flirt with any source, even some communist countries, to help him attain his goal. Yet, he wanted to remain true to NATO. What he rebelled against was what he perceived, right or wrong, as the complete control the United States had over NATO. De Gaulle wanted to ensure that France had "her own personality and controlled her own destiny."³⁴ De Gaulle believed that as long as the US held the reins over NATO, she would be an impediment to France "reclaiming her rightful place at the head of the world's nations."³⁵

Militarily, NATO was almost solely dependent upon the United States for hardware.³⁶ Although de Gaulle felt that it was necessary for France to disengage from this dependence, he judged correctly that his country could not afford to do so. Yet, as the muscle of NATO grew, so did the tensions between its two most belligerent members. As Dupre suggests, "French 'grandeur' was simply incompatible with American domination

of France, militarily, economically, and culturally and this conviction to resist was the seed of disagreement which intensified over NATO.”³⁷

The pinnacle of discord between the two nations focused on nuclear weapons. France “rejected the American proposal for a multilateral nuclear force, and publicly voiced distrust of American credibility.”³⁸ De Gaulle vehemently wanted a strong role as a decisive authority in NATO in regards to the use of nuclear weapons. The United States refused. Openly hostile, France withdrew from NATO in 1966.³⁹ In short:

France had decided to revert to the full exercise of her national sovereignty by ceasing both to place forces at the disposal of integrated NATO commands and to accept the presence of foreign troops not under French commands either on French soil or in French air space.⁴⁰

Although the withdrawal of French forces from NATO forced that organization to totally reassemble its remaining assigned military forces and to reevaluate organizational and operational objectives, the alliance survived. Internal disruptions within France forced de Gaulle from power in 1968.

De Gaulle’s legacy may actually be the creation of one of America’s strongest allies. By forcing his nation from what he perceived as the shackles of dependence on the United States, he restored his country’s self-esteem and national pride. He had to prove to the world and to his own countrymen that France had the capability and the strength to act on her own authority. Although his methods have been characterized as anti-American, such actions may have been the only way for France to regain a status of independence and dignity.⁴¹

Military Relations Today: Friendship With a Wary Eye

The gradual decline of American control in Europe and of French military and economic dependence on the United States have attributed to the thawing of icy relations between the two countries in recent years.⁴² Common strategic goals such as military security, nuclear disarmament, the containment of the potentially powerful reunified Germany, and deterrence of aggression in the very volatile region of the Middle East have focused French and American relations from that of a world power struggle to more of a cooperative rivalry. The methodology for attainment of these goals, however, is the difference. The United States seeks loyal followers to develop coalitions or multinational efforts. France often insists on taking an independent route. The United States still chooses NATO as the appropriate alliance vehicle for European “management.” France focuses more on the solidification and growth of the European Community (EC) and also works to revive the Western European Union (WEU) as the appropriate vehicle for managing European military and security issues.⁴³ Not a member of either the EC or the WEU, the United States has no authority over these organizations. As one American official is known to have grumbled “the EC only wants to talk to us when they feel like it.”⁴⁴

In recent years, three military events interestingly highlight positive and negative perceptions of French and American cooperation. For example, United States war planes bombed Libyan targets in retaliation for a terrorist attack on a German nightclub in 1986. These US planes originated from bases in Great Britain but had been denied access to French airspace by President Mitterrand. Little did the infuriated US public realize that this was, as one author describes, “another affair in which Washington did not respect

France enough to try for a common policy.”⁴⁵ Prior to the bombing raid, Mitterrand had suggested to the US “that the two of us talk seriously about getting rid of Qaddafi.”⁴⁶ France and other European allies were informed only one day in advance of US intentions to bomb Libya. The French president judged this plan to be too limited but since further discussions of the US decision were closed, he chose not to allow allied access to French airspace. Of significant note, after the raid “France stood out as the only major European ally in which a majority of the public approved of the bombing.”⁴⁷

The second event almost brought France and the United States together in a war against Iran. That nation had been harassing and pirating merchant ships in the Persian Gulf in an attempt to disrupt the worldwide commercial shipment of oil. The United States initiated Operation Earnest Will and provided naval warships as escorts to commercial ships traversing the dangerous waters. “France’s naval and financial contribution to Operation Earnest Will ranked second to America’s” yet was often overlooked when Congressional critics publicly complained of lack of Western European support.⁴⁸

Most recently, Operation Desert Storm demonstrated French and American military cooperation as US led coalition forces liberated Kuwait from Iraqi military occupation. Although the US had been growing quite cozy with the Germans in recent years, Germany supplied minimal support and no military troops to the war effort. France ranked second only to Great Britain in the number of troops it supplied in support of the multinational forces. At the same time, it had to tenuously balance this coalition support with keeping calm over 4 million of its Arab immigrants living in country.

Over the past decade the American public has begun to question more loudly the need for US involvement and support, both militarily and financially, in NATO. At one point, 60% of the US military budget was dedicated to NATO support. More and more American's suspected that Europe, "especially Germany, suffered from military dependence."⁴⁹ At the same time, France, bolstered by the legacy of de Gaulle to develop its own military independence, actually began to veer from the de Gaulle doctrine and "sought to play a defense role beyond its borders."⁵⁰ Although still not a formal member of NATO's integrated military command, operationally France supported NATO with such support as a plan for a 47,000 member Rapid Action Force.⁵¹

Approaching the new millennium, France and the United States now enjoy relatively good relations. French and American military planners continue close, if not formal, coordination and cooperation.⁵² Still, current US politicians "characterize the French as 'difficult to keep on track'. Much of the problem with the American understanding of 'on track' came from France's persistence in trying to manage its own train system."⁵³

Notes

¹Crane Britton, *The Americans and the French*. Harvard University Press, 50.

²Scott K. Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. Army Command and Staff College, 12.

³James J. Dupre, *French-American Relations: Alliance or Opposition in Europe*. Air University, 2.

⁴Crane Britton, *The Americans and the French*. Harvard University Press, 50.

⁵Scott K. Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. Army Command and Staff College, 12.

⁶Dr. James J. Tritten, *The Influence of French Naval Thought on the U.S. Navy*. Naval Doctrine Command, 6.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Crane Britton, *The Americans and the French*. Harvard University Press, 51.

⁹Scott K. Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. Army Command and Staff College, 13.

¹⁰Crane Britton, *The Americans and the French*. Harvard University Press, 52.

Notes

¹¹Scott K.Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. Army Command and Staff College, 14.

¹²Ibid., 15.

¹³James J. Dupre, *French-American Relations: Alliance or Opposition in Europe*. Air University, 3.

¹⁴Scott K.Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. (Army Command and Staff College), 15.

¹⁵Ibid., 16.

¹⁶Ibid., 17.

¹⁷James J. Dupre, *French-American Relations: Alliance or Opposition in Europe* Air University, 12.

¹⁸Crane Britton, *The Americans and the French*. Harvard University Press, 61.

¹⁹Ibid., 63.

²⁰Ibid., 77.

²¹Ibid., 78.

²²Ibid., 78.

²³Ibid., 88.

²⁴Ibid., 88.

²⁵Ibid., 88.

²⁶Ibid., 89.

²⁷Ibid., 92.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., 93.

³⁰Ibid., 80.

³¹James J. Dupre, *French-American Relations: Alliance or Opposition in Europe*. Air University, 20.

³²Ibid., 27-28.

³³Ibid., 30.

³⁴Ibid., 31.

³⁵Ibid., 32.

³⁶Ibid., 32.

³⁷Ibid., 33.

³⁸Ibid., 39.

³⁹Ibid., 51.

⁴⁰Ibid., 52.

⁴¹Ibid., 60.

⁴²Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States, The Cold Alliance Since World War II*. Twayne Publishers, New York, 189.

⁴³Ibid., 222.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 209.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., 210.

Notes

⁴⁸Ibid., 234.

⁴⁹Ibid., 211.

⁵⁰Ibid., 211.

⁵¹Ibid., 214.

⁵²Scott K. Gibson III, *France as an American Military Ally: Problems and Prospects*. Army Command and Staff College, 25.

⁵³Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States, The Cold Alliance Since World War II*. Twayne Publishers, New York, 244.

Chapter 3

French and American Military Education: The Evolution of the War Colleges

Events of history impacted the military relationship between France and the United States. Events of history also influenced the initiation, the development and the evolution of professional education programs for military officers of both nations. This chapter describes the separate, but surprisingly similar, educational paths of the United States Navy Officer and the French Navy Officer and focuses on the creation and the evolution of their respective War Colleges.

The Education Path of the United States Navy Officer

United States Navy officers participate in professional military education throughout their career. Specific levels and types of education are required for promotion as well as selection to exclusive assignments. Initially, the Navy officer's professional military education is very basic and narrow and concentrates on a chosen specialty. As officers progress in their careers, military education becomes more expansive and includes exposure to the doctrine of other services (joint education), to the broad view of national strategy and political influence, and to the concepts of foreign services (combined, coalition, alliances).

The education process starts immediately upon the officer's entrance into the Navy and indoctrinates the individual to the unique culture, philosophy and purpose of the service he or she has contracted to join. The commissioning programs of the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) available at universities throughout the country and of the United States Naval Academy provide a young officer with an undergraduate college degree as well as a commissioned rank. Individuals with college degrees may attain a commission by successfully completing the Navy Officer Candidate School.

The next stage of a Navy officer's professional military education is aimed at a specific career focus. This will be one of the warfighting fields of aviation, submarine warfare or surface warfare. Each of these categories offers unique education requirements. Non-warfighting fields are also available to a Navy officer but are usually very restrictive and competitive. Until combat restrictions began to lift, female Navy officers pursued such career fields as Fleet Support. Training an officer to become an aviator or a ship driver is intensive, time-consuming and expensive. Standards for qualification in these fields are strict and specific. Although opportunities are available, with restrictions, to "lateral transfer" from one career focus to another, it is unusual that Naval officers will do so once they have qualified in their chosen field. Not only would it be expensive to retrain the officer in another career field, but that individual would then be about two years behind his or her contemporaries in qualifications. It would be very difficult for that individual to remain competitively promotable.

The Navy highly encourages their officers to achieve Masters Degrees in subjects that will further their knowledge in their career fields. Such higher academic degrees are often required, though not specifically mandated, for selection for promotion. With several

options available for achieving a Master's Degree, a Navy officer usually does so by mid-career. At the Navy's Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, an officer can pursue a degree in a variety of areas.

At specific career levels, Navy officers will usually attend a leadership school that will provide the principles and practicalities to aid them to successfully meet the challenge of a specific leadership assignment. Department Head school, Executive Officer school and Commanding Officer school are examples.

Joint Professional Military Education is available to Navy officers at the mid-grade and senior levels of their careers. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 mandated that successful completion of such training become a requirement for a Navy officer to achieve Flag rank. Until that time, joint education in the United States Navy, although available, was considered more of an option than a requirement. For Navy officers, the decision to pursue such an education has always conflicted with time and availability. The absence of a qualified warfighter from active duty for approximately a year is debated by some as detrimental to the readiness of the Navy. The balance must be made between his or her absence and from what that officer will achieve in education that can be brought beneficially back to the ship, submarine, airplane, or office.

Navy officers may pursue Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) through several options. Phase I joint credit include: Naval War College or Naval Command and Staff College; Marine Corps War College or Command and Staff College; Army War College or Command and Staff College; Air War College or Command and Staff College; Navy, Army or Air Force non-resident programs; selected curricula at the Naval Postgraduate School; or selected Foreign War Colleges, to include the French Joint

Defense College. The Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia, provides Phase II JPME credit. Successful completion of Phase I and Phase II are required criteria for an officer to achieve status as a Joint Services Officer (JSO) in the US military. The National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, part of the National Defense University system, provide full JPME credit upon successful completion of their courses of study. For the Navy officer, the Naval War College is the most common option.

History and Evolution of the United States Naval War College

The War College of the United States Navy was founded on 6 October 1884 as a rather radical concept during a time in history of significant change. The General Order signed on that day stated “A college is hereby established for an advanced course of professional study for naval officers, to be known as the Naval War College.”¹ That simple statement produced a profound legacy that influences Navy thought today.

Yet, in the late 19th century, the concept of professionalism was just emerging. Advanced studies in any career field, including law and medicine, were practically non-existent although graduate study was beginning to take shape in certain institutions of higher learning. The Naval Academy did attempt to prepare officers for long term careers but the emphasis on ‘professionalism’ for a military service officer was more of attitude than a product of training or education. Also, science, technology and the emerging fields of social sciences created marked changes not only in the academic thought of educational reformers but in everyday society including business and industry. The Navy was not immune to such conditions.

Born of the time of the American Revolution, the United States Navy was a traditional sea-going service of mighty ships made of wood and sailcloth. Now, one hundred years later, another revolution—in industry—created a need for the Navy to cast off old thought and to modernize. After the Civil War, the Navy had fallen into neglect and disrepair. Support from a disinterested general public had declined.

Engineers and technicians emerged, much to the consternation of traditional line officers, with grand ideas for new Navy ships. The time was ripe for theorists to rise and proclaim supremacy of the sea and global expansion. Alfred Thayer Mahan was the granddaddy of such theorists and, as one of the original staff members of the new Naval War College, published his thoughts on naval sea power that exploded throughout the world. The late 19th century saw the United States venture forth from its isolationism to stretch its limbs in the areas of emerging navalism and of an expanding global role. These were the basic themes eloquently stressed by Mahan. The United States dared itself to match the great seapowers and colonial nations of the day—Great Britain and France.

Stephen B. Luce was the first President of the Naval War College and he concentrated on the four areas of knowledge of the reformers of the day—'science' as understood in the late 19th century, history, German military thought, and American business management.² He was the first to stress the need to create a professional Navy Officer dedicated to learning the art of war. He had attended various Army military schools and wanted to incorporate some of their principles in the teachings of the War College. Of particular note were the Army's Artillery School and the Infantry and Cavalry "Schools of Application." Such specialty schools had the "aim to qualify officers for any duty they may be called upon to perform or for any position however high in rank."³

More interestingly, these Army schools were inspired by the schools of German military education of the time, specifically the Berlin *Kriegsakademie*. “By 1870, Germany largely replaced France as the model for military men.”⁴ German professional military education stressed training officers for higher command and staff work and that any man of ordinary intellect could learn to carry out any such tasks. The German schools were also perfectly suited for incorporating the rapid changes in technology that began to impact on war.⁵ The German *Kriegsakademie* became the standard in the creation of the Ecole Militaire Superieure in 1878 and the Royal Military Staff School in 1873, higher military schools of France and Great Britain, respectively.⁶

General Upton, a West Point graduate, traveled abroad to study military institutions in Europe and Asia with the objective of incorporating the best techniques of study into the curricula of the US army schools. He traveled to Japan, China, India, Persia, Russia, Italy, Austria, Germany, France and Great Britain and observed that:

Abroad it is the universal theory that the art of war should be studied only after an officer has arrived at full manhood and therefore most governments have established post-graduate institutions for nearly all arms of service where meritorious officers may study strategy, grand tactics and all the science of war.⁷

Encouraged after meeting with General Upton, Luce perceived of such a school for the education of the professional Naval Officer. Luce had ideas for his general curriculum but allowed his staff to develop it. Also, his method of study was to be ‘comparative’ or the ‘case method’ which were radically progressive as compared to other higher learning schools of the day. Harvard Law had just introduced the ‘case method’ into its curriculum only ten years earlier.⁸

Luce requested a first class of 50 officers of Commander level or higher rank. Eight officers of the rank of lieutenant reported for the first session. Most did not understand or appreciate the necessity of their attendance at this new school. This first class would complete their studies in three months. Professional study for their counterparts in the equivalent military schools abroad lasted two years. Only two members, one Army officer and one civilian (a New York lawyer), comprised the original staff. The disgruntled students questioned why Navy education was conducted by non-Navy personnel. The answer was pathetically easy. No Navy officers were available who could teach such courses. The Army officer taught Military Strategy and the civilian, also a professor at the Naval Academy, taught International Law.⁹ Those subjects as well as Naval Tactics and Naval History and Strategy rounded out the original curriculum. The staff of two grew quickly to a staff of four and now included Alfred Thayer Mahan. Mahan's influence on the Naval War College and on Naval theory in general is legendary.

Examples of lecturers and their topics for that first year included:¹⁰

Theodore Roosevelt—The War of 1812

C. H. Stockton—Strategic Features of the Pacific Coast

D. Kennedy—Tactics of the Torpedo

C.C. Rodgers—General Staff and Intelligence

The second class expanded to 20 students but still remained at the level of lieutenant. Through the next years, believers in the principles of the War College fought with skeptics both in and out of the Navy. The Naval War College continued to evolve into a justifiable institution whose products—Naval Officers indoctrinated on the conduct of war as well as doctrine and theory applicable to the operations of war—were to prove invaluable.

World War I provided the first test of the products of the War College and the graduates proved themselves well. At this time, the curriculum evolved into one that concentrated more heavily on the aspects of Command, Strategy, Tactics, and Policy. Also, now included was the importance of Logistics as well as Joint Army-Navy Operations in Naval Warfare. The latter topic was the first introduction to the concept of jointness in military operations...and education.

World War II tested the lessons and war games of the classroom. Admiral Chester Nimitz, in praise of the teachings of the Naval War College stated “nothing that happened during the war was a surprise...absolutely nothing except the kamikaze tactics toward the end of the war; we had not visualized these.”¹¹ Incorporated into the curriculum after the war were insights gained from combat. Lessons were reoriented around two basic concepts: Strategy and Tactics and Strategy and Logistics. National affairs now became a topic of discussion included in the lesson plan. Such aspects as current domestic and foreign policy, international law, economics, and specific geographic regions were included.¹²

The Naval War College admitted its first foreign students in 1895. At this time, many foreign military institutions of higher learning requested information from the US College for teaching in their own schools.¹³ In 1956, the Naval War College established the Naval Command College specifically for international officers in the senior ranks of commander or captain. In the 1960's the Naval War College separated into the College of Naval Warfare which emphasized a course of study in policy and strategy for senior US Naval officers and into the College of Naval Command and Staff which emphasized a course of study in operational and tactical elements of command for the middle grade officers of

senior lieutenant and lieutenant commander rank. Both schools included introductory studies of international relations, international law, military management, economics and comparative cultures. The establishment of the Naval Staff College in 1972 for middle grade international officers rounded out the current schools of the Naval War College of today.

The restructured curriculum of 1972 also serves as the focus of today's current curriculum. Fundamentals of Luce and Mahan were reintroduced and courses included: Strategy and Policy, Defense Economics and Decision Making and Naval Operations. Today the basic curriculum of the Naval War College includes three core courses: Strategy and Policy, National Security Decision Making and Joint Military Operations. In addition, there is a multidisciplinary Electives program.

The Education Path of the French Navy Officer

Commissioning methods for French Navy officers include the French Naval Academy and a program similar to the US Officer Candidate School. For selection consideration to the Academy, interested high school students must pass a competitive national examination given annually. Highly qualified individuals from the non-commissioned ranks who possess at a minimum a high school diploma may also seek a commission. These individuals must also pass a national oral and written examination.

French Navy officers participate in professional military education throughout their careers. Initially, the education focus is specialized and includes one or two years at the Academy or an equivalent school for the Officer Candidate program. The curriculum focuses on three major areas:

- command training, character and motivation development
- enhancement of scientific knowledge
- general knowledge development in three fields: communication, history and geography, and languages and civilization.¹⁴

In addition, an officer receives a specialized education which lasts between three to five years depending on the chosen field of study. The officer can continue this specialty focus at the Academy or at one of the various civilian or military schools available. Upon successful completion, an officer will possess an engineering diploma and solid background in military philosophy. In some cases, officers also receive advanced degrees.

The next stage of professional military education for the Navy officer provides further knowledge in command and technical areas of study. This stage is considered the First Level of Advanced Military Education and takes place over the next five years of the officer's career. Upon successful completion of the command portion, an officer receives a Military Education Diploma and has acquired increased knowledge of French Defense organizations as well as a "cultural broad-mindedness in various areas such as: geopolitics, knowledge of international institutions, economics, technology, and space."¹⁵

For the technical portion of this first level of advanced military education, some officers will attend such schools as Advanced Electrical Engineering School, Advanced Aeronautical Engineering School, and Advanced Nuclear School. Officers who successfully complete these schools will fill military positions on service, joint or inter-allied staffs in such specialized areas as electronic warfare, intelligence, management, nuclear studies, and research.

The highest stage of professional military education for an officer is also referred to as the Second Level of Advanced Military Education. This stage prepares the 'elite' of

officers at middle-grade (US equivalent of O-4s and O-5s) for very high level command, staff, or directorate positions within the French Navy. Education for commanders and decision-makers takes place at the French Joint Defense College. Selection for attendance requires an officer to complete an extremely competitive examination. Upon successful completion of this college an officer receives the Advanced Military Studies Diploma. The curriculum at this college teaches the officer to:

- participate in the design, planning, and conduct of operations (particularly in the joint context) at the national, multilateral, and inter-allied services level
- assume duties on command staffs or at the Service Headquarters
- assume duties in national and international organizations in which the French Minister of Defense is represented.¹⁶

History and Evolution of the French Joint Defense College

Since its conception in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, advanced education for the French military officer has endured a cycle of highs and lows. At its highest point, the French military education program enjoyed worldwide prestige and set the standard for others to emulate. At its lowest point, some historians claim that serious weaknesses in the system led to the French military catastrophes of both World Wars. Today, the French Joint Defense College is a solidly competent organization that compares positively with equivalent advanced military education programs of other countries.

Prior to the 1800's, French military officers were primarily from the nobility and aristocracy. The French revolution "opened the officer corp to the sons of the middle class" and "many of France's best young minds entered the army."¹⁷ For France, and for Europe in general, the late 17th century and early 18th century was the period of Enlightenment. Positive attitudes developed for increased learning. The concept of modern warfare and a "theory" of war emerged. By the wayside went military

swashbuckling cavalierism. A 'military revolution' and the modern technology of warfare suddenly created a need for officers to master knowledge in such fields as mathematics, engineering, and navigation.¹⁸ European governments, including France, began raising large armies which demanded management and sustainment. General staff corps emerged for the purpose of managing such armies.

Military academies appeared in the late 1700's thus solidifying that "military education beyond the most elementary level had finally come of age."¹⁹ Leading military figures of the day began to produce worthy historic military literature for use at these academies...and the French led the way in this endeavor.²⁰

The complexities of modern warfare and the emergence of a general staff to manage large forces created a need for a professionally educated military officer. Advanced military education programs emerged. Also, significant at this time was the need to give the career military officer something to do between wars. Historically, vast armies dissolved after most conflicts and revolutions. Modern forces retained permanency thus creating the professional military officer.²¹

Phillippe de Segur, the French minister of war in 1780 conceived, for France, the precursor of the first true staff college. The military conduct of war was the only subject taught at this school.²² Soon, the Prussians created the globally prestigious Kriegsakademie as the model for military general staff education. Throughout Europe, other such schools of advanced military education formed.

However, during the era of Napoleon in France, military education characterized by practical field experience overcame the knowledge learned in the classroom. Napoleon "tended to look down on the administrators and technicians produced by the

contemporary equivalent of a staff college.”²³ Additionally, the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy influenced a change in the French military officer corp after 1815. The contemporary class of officer now consisted of a unique dichotomy of the new aristocracy and of the ex-non-commissioned officers of Napoleon’s army who had proven themselves in battle and had risen to command ranks. Neither component acclimated well to book learning or classroom study.²⁴

Still, in 1817 the French minister of war proposed a school to specifically prepare young officers for the General Staff Corp. The proposal was for a two year course and a student body of approximately 30 lieutenants who had to pass a rigorous and competitive examination for attendance selection. Upon acceptance of the proposal, the Ecole d’Application d’Etat Major was established. In contrast to their Prussian equivalent which concentrated on tactics, the French school concentrated on general theoretical studies.²⁵

This French staff college never fully achieved the same prestigious status as the Prussian General Staff College. Graduates of the French school were never fully accepted by their contemporaries in the regular officer corp who resented the elitism attributed to these select few.²⁶ Historians point to the fact that during this time (mid-1800s) France was engaged in numerous conflicts. French officers gained vast operational experience from these conflicts and this greatly reduced the validity and the legitimacy of the classroom study of war. The Ecole d’Application d’Etat Major closed in 1876.

At the same time, however, the French established the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre or War College. Different and much better organized, this school eventually evolved into the French Joint Defense College of today. In 1876 General Lewell, a renowned military historian and first director of the new War College, assembled a prestigious faculty of

fellow historians and accomplished military leaders. Included in this acclaimed group were Field Marshall Henri Petain and Field Marshall Ferdinand Foch who would later become heroic yet controversial figures of both World Wars. The faculty “represented whatever was best and most distinguished in the French Army of the Day.”²⁷

Admission continued to be through a highly competitive examination. Approximately 80 officer comprised the first student body. General Lewel ensured that the two year curriculum was structured for practical operational experience. This school now more closely resembled the Prussian/German school. Some critics claimed the pendulum swung too far, however, in eliminating non-military courses such as economics, politics and the pure sciences.²⁸ There was a strong concentration of the study of war history, particularly of the conflicts of the recent past.²⁹

Faculty and students of the War College were entrusted with the development of military doctrine. The infamous concept of *elan* and the preeminent theory of the offensive dominated the intellectual thought. The disastrous French consequences of the First World War resulted as the end product.³⁰

The tragedy of World War I and a war-weary French society caused the prestige of the armed forces to drop dramatically. The War College lost credibility and legitimacy. Such influences resulted in the restructuring of the curriculum. The course of study remained two years in length. The subject of strategy was eliminated and a variety of non-military subjects reflecting changes going on in society were incorporated. Included in the curriculum were the study of technological innovations such as tank warfare, lessons learned from the Great War, and military history. “Students, using their good sense,

character, and personality could develop decision-making powers”³¹ became the philosophy of the school.

Subjects dropped from the curriculum of the War College showed up at newly developed military schools. In 1936, the College des Hautes Etudes de la Defense National was established. The purpose was to teach the higher conduct of war. This school was also the first of its kind to offer a unified course to include civilian figures of authority and leadership as well as military leaders.³² Included in the curriculum was civil-military relations, economics, finance, foreign policy and the military potential of France. Yet, the course “would never mention glaring contemporary issues like relations with Belgium or Great Britain or the implications...of her alliance with Poland” or “of fighting a coalition war.”³³

This school which was brought to an end by World War II “basically paid much attention to questions of economic warfare and little to anything else.”³⁴ However, the legacy of this school and the incorporation of civilians into the domain of military education in strategy and policy influenced the later creation of the American National War College and the NATO Defense College.

The establishment of additional military colleges effectively split the War College. After World War II, French War Colleges for each branch of the service—Navy, Army and Air Force—emerged. These colleges carried on the segregated responsibility for educating the middle-grade French military officer. Finally, in the early 1990’s these service War Colleges were consolidated into the current and contemporary French Joint Defense College.

Notes

¹Department of the Navy, *United States Naval War College Catalog*, 1994, 8.

²Ronald Spector, *Professors of War, The Naval War College and the Development of the Naval Profession*. Naval War College Press, Rhode Island, 11.

³*Ibid.*, 15.

⁴*Ibid.*, 16.

⁵*Ibid.*, 15.

⁶*Ibid.*, 16.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*, 25.

⁹*Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹Department of the Navy, *United States Naval War College Catalog*, 1994, 12.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³Ronald Spector, *Professors of War, The Naval War College and the Development of the Naval Profession*. Naval War College Press, Rhode Island, 121.

¹⁴Colonel Dolere, "French Air Force Officers Courses", 2.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁷Martin van Creveld, *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance*. The Free Press, New York, 35.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 15.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*, 18.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Ibid.*, 35.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*, 36.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 37.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 38.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 40.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*, 41.

³²Eugenia C. Kiesling, *A Staff College for the Nation in Arms: The College des Hautes Etudes de Defense Nationale, 1936-1939*. Stanford University, 1968, 5.

³³*Ibid.*, 189, 194.

³⁴Martin van Creveld, *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance*. The Free Press, New York) 42.

Chapter 4

The Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College: A Comparison of Curricula

The comparison between the contemporary curricula of the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College reveals more similarities than differences. The mission of both colleges is to prepare high caliber military officers for high caliber positions within a command, staff, directorate, or joint environment. The current curricula of both colleges evolved from the same foundation of 1800 European military ideology and trace common roots back to the pattern set by the original German General Staff College. Most importantly for this paper, neither school formally incorporates the concentrated study of cross-cultural relations into their curricula. However, certain academic components within both colleges integrate contemporary political issues and international relations into the course of study and provides the avenue for an embedded cross-cultural emphasis.

The French Joint Defense College was established on 22 December 1992 as a result of consolidating all French advanced level professional military education service schools. As of March 1997, the United States War Colleges remain segregated by service. This is the one major difference for comparison of the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College. In other words, since each US War College has its own

unique culture, style and approach concerning military education, a comparison between the French Joint Defense College and the United States Naval War College may result in different conclusions than a comparison between the French Joint Defense College and an US War College of a sister service. The author will expound on this point in the last chapter.

The Contemporary Curriculum of the United States Naval War College

Three core courses and an Electives program comprise the curriculum of the United States Naval War College. The first course, the Strategy and Policy area of study, introduces the military officer to the art of *strategic thinking*. The pattern of the course achieves this purpose through three phases. The first phase provides the *theoretical foundation* and examines the concepts of such war theorists as Clausewitz, Sun-Tzu, as well as the great maritime theorist, Alfred Thayer Mahan. *Historical* study of conflicts and wars through the ages encompasses the second phase of this course. The third phase envelopes the relationship between policy and strategy for the student through active *analysis* of recent military conflicts as well as imaginative predictions of future clashes. As stated in the Naval War College catalog this “course of study weaves materials and perspectives from several academic disciplines—history, political science, and international relations.”¹ This course emphasizes a variety of subtopics or themes of which several reflect, question and examine cross-cultural relations, communications and interactions. Specifically, the subtopic of Coalition Warfare and the International Environment asks “How well or poorly did the alliance involved function and why? To what extent did the interests of allied states coincide, and what were the consequences when they diverged?

What determined the distribution of influence within each coalition, and what caused their creation and dissolution? How did the attitudes and behavior of neutrals and non-belligerents affect the conduct of the war?”² Civil-Military Relations studies the interaction between the armed professional and the civilian statesmen. Questions debated within the theme of Social Dimensions of Strategy include: “How was strategy shaped by the nature of a states’ political, economic and social orders, and by its moral values? Is there, for example, an American way of war—an American culture—and if so, what are its fundamental characteristics?”³

Preparation of students for senior leadership and staff assignments is the basic objective of the second core course, National Security Decision Making. Principles from such academic disciplines as management theory, operational research and organizational psychology dominate. The ultimate goal of this course is to establish for the student the potential to make the tough decisions concerning the formation of military forces within the constraints of the lean resources available. Considered are “all major defense planning cases from integrated Department of Defense, joint and allied perspectives.”⁴

Areas of special interest studied during the duration of this course that have the potential for expansion of cross-cultural education include:

- The national interests, objectives and strategies of the United States, its major allies, and potential adversaries.
- Force planning implications of international, regional, and ad hoc coalitions supporting peace making, peace keeping, and humanitarian operations.
- The security implication of international economic trends on relations among the United States, Japan, and Western Europe, and on relations between industrialized and lesser developed nations.⁵

The primary focus of the third core course of the basic curriculum of the Naval War College stresses the operational level of warfare from a joint services perspective. The

Joint Military Operations course fulfills 80 percent of the Phase I, JPME requirements.⁶

Within the context of this course, areas exhibiting potential for analysis of relations across different cultures include the study of combined military operations and the examination of military warfighting capabilities of allies.

The Elective Program provides the student of one of the four schools of the Naval War College the opportunity to pursue academic study from approximately 60 diverse subjects that complement the core curriculum. This is the fourth component of the basic curriculum. For graduation requirements students must pass at least one elective course offered per trimester for credit. Interested students may audit additional elective courses. A sampling of elective course titles from the Naval War College Catalog that demonstrate possible cross-cultural education include:

- U.S. Relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States
- Moscow and the Muslims
- Contemporary Middle Eastern Problems
- Contemporary Latin American Issues
- East-Central Europe
- Introduction to Chinese Civilization
- China and the Modern World
- Ideology and Conflict in the 20th Century
- Political Dynamics of Asia and the Pacific⁷

Additional sources for cross-cultural educational opportunities are available to the military student of the Naval War College throughout the ten month academic year. Guest lecturers from diverse backgrounds address the student body on a variety of different topics. Speakers have included leading military figures as well as senior civilian officials from various government agencies, from industry and from the entertainment and media community. The International Lecture Series specifically invites “eminent international leaders to the College to explore issues of contemporary international concern.”⁸ An

annual Contemporary Civilization Lecture Series provides broad topics of national and international interest. Past guest speakers have included His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor, Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Mr. Tom Clancy, and Mr. Alan Dershowitz.

Noted Conferences and Symposia sponsored by the Naval War College also serve to provide an eclectic source of cross-cultural education opportunities. A biennial International Seapower Symposium “brings together the heads of many of the world’s navies in an effort to foster mutual understanding among maritime nations.”⁹ A Professional Ethics Conferences debates issues such as “the ethics of U. S. intervention into foreign regional conflicts.”¹⁰

The Contemporary Curriculum of the French Joint Defense College

The French Joint Defense College is a one year course of study that commences every September. Officers from the Navy, the Army, the Air Force and from the French Military Security Force known as the Gendarmerie comprise the student body. Approximately one third of the 300 students who attend the yearly course are international officers from military forces throughout the world. The College concentrates heavily on the study of joint, allied and coalition operations.

The college divides the student body into four divisions. Division A, or the ‘international’ division includes very few French students. This division concentrates more on the French experience, French thought and French culture than do the other three divisions. International officers who speak French fluently may be included in one of the other three divisions.

At least two times during the school year, for a period of six to eight weeks each, all officers from their respective services (Army, Navy, Air Force) meet to discuss issues pertinent to that service. This allows, for instance, Navy officers from around the world to discuss and compare the service doctrine of their countries and to also discuss cross-cultural issues that may effect or impact on such doctrine. During this period, the college sponsors service trips to various military bases and installations throughout France.

The curriculum of the French Joint Defense College incorporates four broad areas of study. The Operational Course concentrates on the missions and capabilities of all the military services of France as well as the missions and capabilities of foreign militaries. Potential theaters of operation are examined and discussed. Staff officers facilitate classes on such topics as joint operations and crisis action planning. This course ends with a joint exercise wargame that involves multinational and allied forces.

The Logistics and Management course examines the responsibilities of staff officers as it relates to the movement and sustainment of troops. In addition, interaction and liaison with civilian organizations is studied during this segment. A General Education area of study embodies a variety of diverse topics. Included are geostrategic and geopolitical issues, international relations, contemporary society and defense, evolution of technology and defense, and conferences on military history and contemporary history.

Finally, students attending the Joint Defense College must complete a Research Project. Officers propose their own topics. Group projects are emphasized with teams comprised of three to six students from diverse backgrounds.

While the curricular focus is weighted heavily on European concerns, students and instructors frequently discuss the American view on a variety of issues. The interest level

among all participates on the ‘American way of doing things’ is extremely high. Comparisons with the American military, American politics and the American culture are constantly made. French Navy students, in particular, devour information on American Naval strategy, doctrine and operations.

Notes

¹Department of the Navy, *United States Naval War College Catalog*. 1994, 46.

²*Ibid.*, 47.

³*Ibid.*, 48.

⁴*Ibid.*, 52.

⁵*Ibid.*, 53-54.

⁶*Ibid.*, 59.

⁷*Ibid.*, 69-70.

⁸*Ibid.*, 30.

⁹*Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 32.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Each partner in multinational operations possesses a unique cultural identity—the result of language, values, religious systems, and economic and social outlooks. Even seemingly minor differences, such as dietary restrictions, can have great impact.

—Joint Pub 3-0

The examination of the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College revealed two important points from the perspective of the author of this paper. First, both schools possess the progressive potential to incorporate a formal cross-cultural framework within the context of their professional military education programs. Currently, neither school does so. The evolution of their respective curricula demonstrates an adaptability to the influences of military, political and societal changes throughout the existence of both schools.

Review of the current curriculum of the United States Naval War College shows that cultural issues are embedded in a variety of areas available for student discussion and exposure. The purpose, however, from the view of the author, is not so much to learn about the cultures of other nations, but, perhaps, to consider the impact of such strategic environment influences on American military doctrine, policy, or decision-making. The question becomes, for example, more of a “How will the French way of thinking or acting effect the American viewpoint?” rather than a “What are the positive advantages of the

French perspective and how can I or should I incorporate or consider such viewpoints in my American military doctrine, policy, decision-making?” This same paradigm is evident within the French Joint Defense College.

Formal cross-cultural education is a forward-thinking concept and both War Colleges examined in this paper must recognize its criticality. The author of this paper is of the opinion that professional military education programs, especially for US officers, may be the only exposure they receive to any such educational awareness of cross-cultural relationships. Proximity alone exposes French officers more frequently to a variety of different national cultures and ideologies. A historic isolationism as well as geographic separation prevents many US officers from cross-cultural experiences. French students appear to be somewhat more interested in the American perspective than are American students toward the French viewpoint. Is this possibly due to a perception that the United States is the remaining world super power whereas France is a leading global power? American students divide their interest in several directions. The French students can more easily focus on one.

The author recommends for further research how formal cross-cultural education can be incorporated into the curricula of professional military education programs. Although this paper focused on two War Colleges, further research can be broadened toward other War Colleges. The Industrial College of the Armed Forces, for example, may be used as a standard guideline. Currently, that school includes among its formal courses such selections as *France: Difficult Ally or Strategic Partner* and *Understanding Russian Behavior*.

The second major point discerned by the author is the emphasis of jointness both the United States Naval War College and the French Joint Defense College place on the mission, objectives and curricula of their schools. Joint doctrine is the cornerstone and joint education is a primary purpose of both Colleges. Yet, the French Joint Defense College has progressed beyond the United States Naval War College and further into the future as a result of consolidation of the once service-segregated French war colleges. This author makes the argument that, by virtue of this merger, the French Joint Defense College demonstrates a truer commitment to the indoctrination of jointness than do the US war colleges.

More interestingly, in addition to Army, Navy and Air Force officers, the French have included the Gendarmerie, or their Military Security Police Force personnel, as students of the Joint Defense College. In contrast, not only do the US war colleges continue to segregate by service, but are divided further by military rank into Senior and Intermediate level schools.

The author poses the following questions. Do the military services of the United States possess unique cultures and traditions? Do the military services of the United States approach such functions as leadership, decision-making, disciplinary actions and management of stress differently? Should cross-cultural knowledge not only include the dimensions, biases and viewpoints of nations of the world but, perhaps, of the dimensions, biases and viewpoints of the separate military services of the United States?

Perhaps the US war colleges should heed the example of the French system and consider the value of consolidation. The author recommends this issue for further research. Downsized services, resource constraints, an obscure enemy and the overlap of

service missions and capabilities question the validity of continued segregated war colleges. Of note, French personnel are already suggesting the possibility of the creation of a European War College. From a nationally consolidated school to a regionally consolidated one is a further step beyond the American system.

In conclusion, this paper focused on the Franco-American military relationship which, although volatile through two centuries, has remained one of necessity, mutual acknowledgment and continuation. For brevity this paper examined only two nations yet, the premise could be made for most nations of the world. History demonstrates that yesterday's enemies usually become tomorrow's allies. Military involvement in any future conflict will no longer be a solo endeavor. Multinational coalitions and alliances will dominate all future actions. It is imperative that members of any national military force possess a clear cultural awareness of any future partner whose actions and decisions may mean the difference between life and death.

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